

OUTGOING MESSAGE

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TO: IMMEDIATE WHITE HOUSE//SITUATION ROOM FOR MR FAZIO,
 STATE RCI//OPERATIONS CENTER MR FRY, NMCC//ATTENTION
 CIA REP, TREASURY DEPT//INFO FOR [REDACTED]
 WARNING NOTICE SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND METHODS
 INVOLVED

ITEM NO: 2

DATE: 7 NOVEMBER 1974

SUBJECT: CHINESE PROPOSAL COULD LEAD TO BORDER SETTLEMENT
 WITH USSR

REF : VARIOUS PRESS, 7 NOV 74, UNCLASSIFIED

IN AN UNUSUAL DISPLAY OF TACTICAL FLEXIBILITY, PEKING HAS
 SURFACED A PACKAGE PROPOSAL FOR AN AGREEMENT WITH THE USSR THAT
 COULD LEAD TO A BORDER SETTLEMENT .

THE PROPOSAL IS CONTAINED IN A MESSAGE FROM THE CHINESE TO
 SOVIET GOVERNMENTS MARKING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE OCTOBER REVOLU-
 TION. IT CALLS FOR A MUTUAL NON-AGGRESSION AND NON-USE OF
 FORCE PACT, A MUTUAL TROOP PULLBACK FROM DISPUTED BORDER AREAS,
 MEASURES TO AVERT ARMED CONFLICT ALONG THE FRONTIER, AND MAINTENANCE
 OF THE EXISTING STATUS QUO OF THE BORDER ITSELF.

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THE CHINESE HAD MADE A SIMILAR PROPOSAL IN PRIVATE TO THE SOVIETS SEVERAL YEARS AGO, BUT PEKING ^{PUBLICLY} HAS NOT PROPOSED A NON-AGRESSION PACT WITH THE SOVIETS. THE CHINESE HAD GREETED EARLIER AND WELL-PUBLICIZED SOVIET CALLS FOR A NONAGRESSION PACT WITH STONY PUBLIC SILENCE AND PRIVATE CONTEMPT. CHINESE OFFICIALS ARGUED THAT THE SOVIET PROPOSAL WAS HYPOCRITICAL AND THAT ANY SUCH TREATY WOULD HAVE TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY A WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET FORCES FROM THE FRONTIER.

THIS LINKAGE REMAINS IN THE NEW CHINESE PROPOSAL. PEKING MAY BELIEVE THAT MOSCOW, BY PUBLICIZING ITS OWN, APPARENTLY ACCOMMODATING PROPOSALS HAD CREATED A UNFAVORABLE INTERNATIONAL IMPRESSION, PARTICULARLY AMONG FOREIGN COMMUNIST PARTIES. THE CHINESE WOULD ALSO WISH TO APPEAR MORE FLEXIBLE AND MAY HOPE TO CREATE DIFFICULTIES FOR SOVIET EFFORTS TO ORGANIZE AN INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST CONFERENCE.

AS LONG AS A NONAGGRESSION AND NON-USE-OF-FORCE PACT REMAINS LINKED TO THE QUESTION OF WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET FORCES FROM THE BORDER, CHINA ALMOST CERTAINLY EXPECTS THAT THE SOVIET UNION WILL FIND THE PACKAGE UNACCEPTABLE. NEVERTHELESS, THE NEW PROPOSAL

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REPRESENTS THE FIRST RECASTING OF THE CHINESE POSITION SINCE THE TALKS BEGAN.

IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE CHINESE WISH TO CONVEY THE IMPRESSION THAT PROSPECTS FOR IMPROVED SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS MAY NOT BE AS DIM AS MOST OBSERVERS BELIEVE. THIS MAY REFLECT A TACTICAL MANEUVER BY PEKING TO REDUCE SOME OF THE LEVERAGE HELD BY THE US AGAINST CHINA, ESPECIALLY IN ADVANCE OF PRESIDENT FORD'S TRIP TO VLADIVOSTOK AND ANY FUTURE TRIP BY SECRETARY KISSINGER TO PEKING.

IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT THE NEW PROPOSAL WAS DESIGNED AS A SOP
TO THOSE IN CHINA WHO MIGHT FAVOR SOME REDUCTION IN CHINA'S HOSTI-
LITY TOWARD THE USSR. ARTICLES IN THE CHINESE PRESS SUGGEST THAT MAO
MAY SUSPECT THAT ELEMENTS IN THE MILITARY HARBOR SUCH VIEWS.

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